HEAD VI—FOREST.

This Department is overmanned. The work of conservation does not keep pace with the cost of establishment nor is it proportionate to the Revenues from the Forests. According to the Budget under discussion, Rs. 5,90,000 are set apart for conservation and works. The cost of establishments comes to Rs. 2,40,900, so that for expending nearly 6 Rs. on conservation, the establishment charges come to about Rs. 2½. No doubt, the Department attends to the working down of timber also. Even then, the proportion is certainly too much. One feature of the Budget is that it makes no separate provision for a plantation division in the forthcoming year. Detailed Account No. 6 A shows that for the work of actual conservation (by which I understand the work of planting to make up for the deficit caused by the annual denudation) Rs. 41,000 (in items d, e and f) are allowed. Of this Rs. 2,500 go to preserve the Forest for protection from fire. There remains only Rs. 38,600 for the actual work of rearing and planting. The total quantity of timber to be removed from the Forests by Government and private agencies combined is valued at Rs. 6,32,000, Comment on this seems to be needless. Provision is made of Rs. 3,600 for working plans. It is a matter of common knowledge that there are in the archives of the Forest Department office several working plans prepared by competent officers at a cost of several thousands of rupees during the administration of the Department by Messrs. Rama Row and Subramonia Aiyar. Any one of these plans may be made use of and special allotment of funds for this purpose could be avoided. The rate of cutting down timber should bear a definite proportion to the rate of plantation. A tree felled to-day is the growth of 40 to 70 years. For every tree cut down, at least five plants should invariably come into existence so that, making allowance to loss on account of thinning and natural decay or failure to grow, the tree that is cut down to-day is replaced by another. Large funds should be allowed for this. Under the item of receipts in respect of firewood and charcoal is given Rs. 25,000. This requires a word of comment. There ought to be a prohibitive export duty on firewood. The scarcity of fuel supply in the country is great. Fuel is required for domestic consumption by the people and also for the use of factories already in existence and those that are being formed. A heavy export duty which will completely prevent firewood from being sent out of the country should soon be imposed. For charcoal also this is necessary. A policy like the one I have advocated will either stop export or increase the revenues. It will be advantageous if Government fix the maximum quantity of firewood that may be exported from the country, if for any reason, Government think, that a total prohibition of export is not practicable. The only other item that I would touch upon is what is known as the minor produce. The receipts under this head are given as Rs. 30,000. This is too low. The revenue under this head is capable of vast expansion. A special officer should be put in charge of the work of collecting the minor produce from the forest. With a separate staff, this officer should be able to considerably develop this branch of the revenue.

HEAD No. IX—A.

LAW AND JUSTICE AND COURTS OF LAW.

With regard to this Head, I do not propose to take the time of the Council by making any lengthy remarks. I associate myself with all that has been said by my esteemed friends Messrs. Krishna Aiyangar and Parameswaran Pillai. I will only submit a word with regard to the receipts and expenditure of the Department. The receipts from the sale of court fee stamps are said to be Rs. 15,25,000. A small portion of this revenue, as suggested by Mr. Krishna Aiyangar is derived from Criminal Courts and, if so, that may be set off against the total receipts. Though 15 and odd lakhs of rupees are contributed by Civil Courts the expenditure on Courts is only six lakhs. The gain to the State is over 8 lakhs. Taxing of justice as a policy is neither safe nor sound. To make profits out of it is to say the least inequitable. An increase of revenue under stamps only means an increase of litigation, which undoubtedly means that people are getting more quarrelsome. It is not a proof of their growing riches. The Judicial Department is notoriously low-paid and from my observation of the trend of affairs in this country for the last twenty years, the Judicial Department, in spite of its docility and amenability to turn out good work, has always been treated as a step-daughter in a united family.

The salaries of the judicial officers, particularly, the Munsiffs and the Judges and the members of the subordinate staff should soon be revised. My friend Mr. Krishna Aiyangar pleaded the cause of the Munsiffs and Judges. I am certainly of opinion that Munsiffs and Judges deserve increase of salary. But I would more strongly plead the cause of the subordinates of the Munsiffs' Courts, because the brunt of the work falls upon them. Those who have anything to do with the work in Court can watch and see how heavy is the work that falls upon them. I know as a matter of fact that clerks have

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